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Secretary Kempthorne Selects New U.S. World Heritage Tentative List

WASHINGTON, DC - Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne today announced his selection of 14 U.S. sites to be included on a new United States World Heritage Tentative List. The 14 properties on the new list will now be eligible to be considered for nomination by the United States to the UNESCO World Heritage List, which recognizes the most significant cultural and natural treasures on the planet.

"I am pleased to be able to take the necessary first step so that these truly significant American natural and cultural properties can be considered for the most prestigious international recognition accorded to properties of global importance," Kempthorne said. "Each of these sites is important to Americans as well as others around the world."

World Heritage Sites are designated under the World Heritage Convention. The United States was the prime architect of the Convention, an international treaty for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage sites of global significance proposed by President Richard M. Nixon in 1972, and was the first nation to ratify it. There are 851 sites in 140 of the 184 signatory countries. Currently there are 20 World Heritage Sites in the United States already listed.

The new sites announced on the United States World Heritage Tentative List can be considered over the next 10 years for formal nomination by the United States as World Heritage Sites.

Each of the properties included on the new U.S. World Heritage Tentative List is described below.

Neither inclusion in the Tentative List nor inscription as a World Heritage Site imposes legal restrictions on owners or neighbors of sites, nor does it give the United Nations any management authority or ownership rights in U.S. World Heritage Sites, which continue to be subject to U.S. law.

The preparation of a Tentative List is a necessary first step in the process of nominating a site to the World Heritage List, because a country cannot nominate a property unless it has been on its Tentative List for a minimum of a year. Countries also are limited to nominating no more than two sites in any given year.

The new Tentative List replaces an outdated one prepared in 1982 and contains a diverse collection of natural and cultural sites, located in 15 States and one U.S. Territory. They include

one that is being proposed for both natural and cultural values. The owners include, among others, several Federal agencies, state governments, private foundations, and religious groups. The list is scheduled to be formally submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre by February 1, 2008.

Secretary Kempthorne included these properties in the Tentative List after receiving applications from the owners of 35 sites, all of whom applied voluntarily. In order to be included, a proposed site had to meet several U.S. prerequisites in addition to appearing to meet the stringent World Heritage criteria of international importance; the U.S. prerequisites included the written agreement of all property owners to the nomination of their property, general support from stakeholders, including elected officials, and a prior official determination that the property was nationally important (such as by designation as a National Historic or National Natural Landmark). The World Heritage nomination criteria can be found on the National Park Service Office of International Affairs website <http://www.nps.gov/oia>.

The applications were evaluated by National Park Service staff, non-government experts on the World Heritage nomination process, and the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO. The public had the opportunity to comment on the proposals for the Tentative List. Nearly all the comments received from Federal, State, and local government executive and legislative officials, and other stakeholders supported the inclusion of sites in their States and communities.

Because UNESCO asks countries to wait a year before submitting nominations from their tentative lists, the first time that any U.S. World Heritage nominations drawn from the new List could go forward would be at the beginning of 2009 with consideration by the World Heritage Committee likely in the summer of 2010. The Committee, composed of representatives of 21 nations elected as the governing body of the World Heritage Convention, makes the final decisions on which nominations to accept on the World Heritage List at its annual meeting each summer.

The National Park Service manages all or parts of 17 of the 20 U.S. World Heritage Sites currently listed, including Yellowstone National Park, the Everglades, and the Statue of Liberty, and serves as the principal technical agency for the U.S. Government to the Convention. In 2005, the U.S. won a fourth term on the World Heritage Committee and will serve until 2009.

General information about the Tentative List process is posted on the Office of International Affairs website at <http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/worldheritage/tentativelist.htm>. The earlier National Park Service preliminary staff report, including summaries of information on all 35 sites that were considered for the Tentative List, is available at: <http://www.nps.gov/oia/TLEssayFinal.pdf>. The original Applications submitted to the National Park Service for the candidate sites can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/oia/NewWebpages/ApplicantsTentativeList.html>.

For further information, please contact Stephen Morris, Chief, Office of International Affairs at (202) 354-1802 or Gerry Gaumer in the National Park Service's Office of Public Affairs at (202) 208-6843.

The U.S. World Heritage Tentative List 2008

CULTURAL SITES (9):

Civil Rights Movement Sites, Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama

These three historically African-American churches: Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church in Montgomery and the Bethel Baptist and 16th Street Baptist Churches in Birmingham were the locations of iconic events in the mid-20th century civil rights movement for African-Americans, a movement that both drew from and has had a profound influence on human rights movements elsewhere in the world, particularly regarding non-violent social change. The key events were the 1955-56 Montgomery bus boycott led by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church; the 1965 voting rights march from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery that ended at that church, the 1963 street demonstrations in Birmingham inspired in part by Rev. Fred Lee Shuttlesworth of Bethel Baptist Church, and the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Church that killed four young girls. The churches remain in the ownership of their congregations.

Dayton Aviation Sites, Ohio

These are four sites associated with the Wright Brothers' pioneering efforts in human flight, in and around the city of Dayton, where they constructed and tested the Wright Flyer III, the first airplane that could take off, fly until it exhausted its fuel supply, land safely, and do so repeatedly. Huffman Prairie was a cow pasture when the Wrights began to use it in 1904 for test flights; it remains an open landscape on the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. The small 2-story brick building that housed the Wright Cycle Company and Wright & Wright Printing in 1895-97 today houses exhibits and National Park Service offices. The Wright Flyer III is enshrined in Wright Hall, a building constructed in the 1940s specifically to house it. Hawthorn Hill, a 2-1/2 story brick mansion, was Orville Wright's home between 1914 and 1948. All of these sites except Hawthorn Hill are part of Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, a unit of the National Park System, although Huffman Prairie is owned by the U.S. Air Force and Wright Hall by Dayton History. Hawthorn Hill is owned by the Wright Family Foundation.

Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks, Ohio

Nine archeological sites containing more than 40 monumental ceremonial earthworks in precise geometric shapes reflect the sophisticated Native American Ohio Hopewell culture during the Woodland Period (1,000-2,000 years ago). They are located within three archeological preserves in the south-central portion of the State, one in each of three of the principal northern tributary valleys of the Ohio River--the Little Miami, the Scioto, and the Muskingum. They include Fort Ancient State Memorial, between Cincinnati and Dayton; the five sites in Hopewell Culture National Historical Park, near Chillicothe, a unit of the National Park System; and the Newark Earthworks State Historic Site in the cities of Newark and Heath. These are among the largest earthworks in the world that are not fortifications or defensive structures, and they contain

extensive deposits of finely crafted artifacts. Their scale is imposing by any standard: the Great Pyramid of Cheops would have fit inside the Wright Earthworks; four structures the size of the Colosseum of Rome would fit in the Octagon; and the circle of monoliths at Stonehenge would fit into one of the small auxiliary earthwork circles adjacent to the Octagon.

Jefferson (Thomas) Buildings (Poplar Forest and Virginia State Capitol), Virginia

These two buildings are proposed as a joint extension to the World Heritage listing that includes Monticello and the University of Virginia. Like those two, they reflect Jefferson's familiarity with Classical Greek and Roman, Renaissance, and French late 18th century architecture. The Virginia State Capitol in Richmond (1785-98), as the first adaptation of the Roman temple form to a governmental building, has been enduringly influential in the use of Classical models for such structures. It remains the State Capitol today; it also served as the Confederate Capitol for most of the Civil War. Poplar Forest is Jefferson's rural retreat in Bedford County that was begun before he retired from the U.S. presidency in 1809. Just south of the remains of a grove of poplars that gave the place its name is the 2-story brick house built in a perfect octagon around a central cube. Poplar Forest is owned by a non-profit corporation dedicated to its preservation and restoration.

Mount Vernon, Virginia

George Washington's long-time home, with its associated gardens and grounds, together form a remarkably well-preserved and extensively documented example of a plantation landscape of the 18th-century American South, based on English models but modified and adapted to the American context. The estate was at the heart of a large plantation operation that included hundreds of slaves. There is a core of 16 surviving 18th-century structures situated within a landscape of associated gardens, fences, lanes, walkways, and other features, situated along the Potomac River, that changed and developed over many years in Washington's family. Washington and his wife are also buried here. The Mount Vernon Ladies Association has owned and maintained the property for 150 years.

Poverty Point National Monument and State Historic Site, Louisiana

This vast complex of earthen structures is on a bayou near the west bank of the Mississippi River. It is an integrated complex of three or four earthen mounds, six enormous concentric semi-elliptical earthen ridges, a large flat plaza, and several borrow areas constructed 1700 - 1100 years ago. It was the largest and most elaborate settlement of its time in North America and was built by a foraging society of hunter-gatherers, not a settled agricultural people, which makes it without parallel in world archeological and ethnographic records, challenging anthropology's basic assumptions about hunter-gatherer societies. It may be the largest hunter-gatherer settlement that has ever existed and its design was absolutely unique. How and why such a society could have so totally transformed the landscape is still not understood.

San Antonio Franciscan Missions, Texas

The modern city of San Antonio, Texas, has grown up around this group of five Spanish Roman Catholic mission properties including some 80 structures that were built in stages from 1724 to 1782 on "open village" plans within walled compounds. The Franciscan missions are a remarkable concentration of surviving structures that superbly represent the Spanish colonial influence in this part of the New World. The religious, economic and technological systems of the missionaries created settled communities that became the basis of the region's ethnically diverse society. One of the missions, San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo), is under the charge of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas as a historic site. The other four (Missions Concepcion, San Jose, San Juan, and Espada, including Rancho de las Cabras) are, with various auxiliary features, included in San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, a unit of the National Park System; their churches are still used by the Roman Catholic Church.

Serpent Mound, Ohio

Serpent Mound, in Adams County, a State memorial, is the largest documented surviving example of a prehistoric effigy mound in the world. It is both the acme of prehistoric effigy mound-building in the world and part of the tradition of effigy mound building among some American Indian cultures of the present Eastern United States. This sinuous earthen embankment more than 1200 feet long includes an oval feature at one end, that may be the serpent's eye, part of its head, or a secondary object, such as an egg, grasped in its open jaws. Indications are that Serpent Mound was built by the Fort Ancient Culture about the year 1120. Serpent Mound embodies fundamental spiritual and cosmological principles of an indigenous ancient American Indian culture and was aligned astronomically to mark the passage of the seasons.

Wright (Frank Lloyd) Buildings, Arizona, California, Illinois, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin

These ten properties are among the most iconic, most intact, most representative, most innovative and most influential of the more than 400 Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) designs that have been erected. They span almost sixty years of his efforts to create an "organic architecture" that attracted widespread international attention and powerfully affected the course of modern architecture around the world as well as in the United States. The properties include the two Taliesins (his long-time homes with studios and schools); three residences he designed for others, two office complexes, a place of worship, a museum, and a governmental complex. They are:

- Taliesin West (1938), Scottsdale, Arizona
- Hollyhock House (1919-21), Los Angeles, California
- Marin County Civic Center (1960-69), San Rafael, California
- Frederick C. Robie House (1908-10), Chicago, Illinois
- Unity Temple (1905-08), Oak Park, Illinois
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (1956-59), New York, New York
- Price Tower (1953-56), Bartlesville, Oklahoma

- Fallingwater (1936-38), Mill Run, Pennsylvania
- S. C. Johnson and Son, Inc., Administration Building and Research Tower, Racine, Wisconsin (1936-39; 1943-50)
- Taliesin (1911 and later), Spring Green, Wisconsin

MIXED NATURAL AND CULTURAL SITE (1):

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Hawaii

This 1,200-mile-long string of islands and adjacent waters represents the longest, clearest, and oldest example of island formation and atoll evolution in the world. A marine national monument designated in 2006, it is jointly managed by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State of Hawaii. The monument is a vast area running northwest from the island of Kauai. Scattered in the deep ocean are some 10 small islands with reefs and shoals. In this remote and still relatively pristine part of the Pacific, marine life remains abundant and diverse, with a large number of species found nowhere else in the world and a wide array of threatened and endangered species. Native Hawaiians reached these islands at least 1,000 years before any other people and planted settlements on some of them, where there are important archeological sites. The islands retain great cultural and spiritual significance to Native Hawaiians. The islands figured as well in the European exploration of the Pacific and in Pacific whaling, communications, and early aviation. One of them, Midway, became the focus of its namesake battle in June 1942--the turning point of World War II in the Pacific.

NATURAL SITES (4):

Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary, American Samoa

This refuge is a small pristine bay on the large Samoan island of Tutuila. It does not include immediately adjacent shorelands. The refuge is a fringing coral reef ecosystem within an eroded volcanic crater. The Bay contains a vast array of tropical marine organisms, including corals, marine mammals, and threatened and endangered species, including hawksbill and green sea turtles. The Bay is a vibrant tropical reef marine ecosystem, filled with populations of coral reef fish and marine invertebrates. The scenic beauty of the bay and its surroundings are also exceptional. Fagatele Bay is administered by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, Georgia

This refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, embraces the vast bulk of the Okefenokee Swamp, a large intact swamp that is the source of two rivers, one that flows into the Atlantic and the other into the Gulf of Mexico. The refuge also has extensive and essentially

undisturbed peat deposits. Okefenokee is one of the world's largest naturally driven freshwater ecosystems with a diversity of habitat types and rich and diverse flora and fauna.

Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona

This large national park, on the southern part of the Colorado Plateau, is most notable for vast, colorful, and well preserved deposits of petrified wood. There are exceptionally large deposits of it in five areas termed "forests." The park, with its scenic vistas and spectacles of colorful rocks, is one of the premier places in the world for the study of the ecosystem of the Late Triassic Epoch some 205-225 million years ago. In addition to the largest deposits of petrified wood in the world, the park contains important fossils of other plants and animals, including dinosaurs.

White Sands National Monument, New Mexico

This property, a unit of the National Park System at the northern end of the Chihuahuan desert, protects vast dunes of gypsum sand that have engulfed more than 176,000 acres--along with plants and animals that have adjusted to this environment. White Sands National Monument is the world's largest and best protected surface deposit of gypsum sand.

U.S. World Heritage Sites (with dates of inscription)

- Mesa Verde National Park (1978)
- Yellowstone National Park (1978)
- Everglades National Park (1979)
- Grand Canyon National Park (1979)
- Independence Hall (1979)
- Kluane / Wrangell-St Elias / Glacier Bay / Tatshenshini-Alsek (1979, 1992, 1994)
- Redwood National and State Parks (1980)
- Mammoth Cave National Park (1981)
- Olympic National Park (1981)
- Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site (1982)
- La Fortaleza and San Juan National Historic Site in Puerto Rico (1983)
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park (1983)
- Statue of Liberty (1984)
- Yosemite National Park (1984)
- Chaco Culture (1987)
- Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (1987)
- Monticello and the University of Virginia in Charlottesville (1987)
- Pueblo de Taos (1992)
- Carlsbad Caverns National Park (1995)
- Waterton Glacier International Peace Park (1995)

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